



BEFORE & AFTER

Training Program Makes Walking Easier

A paved sidewalk increases safety and improve local business

Podujeve/Podujevo (the Albanian/Serbian names) was one of many municipalities in Kosovo that suffered from a decade of neglected infrastructure even before the 1999 conflict. After the conflict, more critical needs, such as roads and water, were the reconstruction priorities. But five years later, the municipality was finally ready to target other priorities, like the crumbling sidewalks that caused safety hazards and deterred foot traffic near businesses. USAID supported a skill-building program for local government officials and leaders of local organizations to motivate residents' involvement in community improvement projects. "We are aware how much a public education campaign could do. But the training taught us organizational skills and how little you need to carry a strong public education campaign once you engage all parties concerned," said municipal information officer Ahmet Ahmeti.



Photo: USAID/Dina Cernobregu

BEFORE The sidewalks in Podujeve/Podujevo were neglected, unsafe and often impassable. Their improvement emerged as a priority during a public meeting organized by two people who attended USAID's training. They organized a two-week campaign targeting local government, businesspeople and residents for contributions.



Photo: USAID/Dina Cernobregu

AFTER The public information campaign — including media coverage, leaflets and one-on-one conversations — resulted in \$150,000 of donations from businesses, while the municipality funded half of the total cost. The 3,500-foot long sidewalk in the town center was rebuilt and now is safe and welcoming for pedestrians.